

Alton Rotary Club: 50 Years
1921 - 1971

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ALTON ROTARY CLUB

1921



1971

50 YEARS

SERVICE ABOVE SELF



*This certifies that the Rotary Club of
Alton, Illinois*

*having been duly organized and having agreed,
through its officers and members, to be bound by the
Constitution and By-laws of Rotary International
which agreement is evidenced by the acceptance of
this certificate, is now a duly admitted member of*

*Rotary International
Club No 851*

*and is entitled to all the rights and privileges of
such membership.*

*In witness whereof the seal of Rotary
International is hereto affixed and the signatures of
its officers, duly authorized, are subscribed hereto this
first day of March, Anno Domini 1921.*

This is a duplicate charter issued 5 October, 1945.

President Rotary International

Secretary Rotary International



50 YEARS OF ROTARY

If, as figures on the calendar prove beyond a doubt, the Alton Rotary Club is 50 years old, come March 1, in what manner shall a history of its experiences be composed?

Perhaps, at this state of maturity, it is more revealing to review the first two decades, since the last three are fairly fresh in the minds of present-day members. This familiarity does not necessarily breed contempt, but the events of the '20's and '30's may serve as a background and research for the question of origin.

It has the added virtue, for this historia, of presenting opportunity for recollection which only the senior member of the club, Martin Bristow, can dispute with regard to accuracy — and he's too chivalrous to exercise this right. This virtue may be counteracted by the necessity to include first-person references, for which there is regret, but no apology.

Civic Leadership

Browsing through the only records available, those of the last 30 years, one finds accounts of directors' meetings in which civic undertakings were given support from the club: The survey of historic buildings; Promotion of the West Junior High School Stadium; Establishment of the short-lived City Manager Municipal Government; McAdams River Road; The Belt Highway; Obstetrics in the Wood River Club which gave the district, Governor Art Hunter, and the Bethalto Club; Campaign and election of Ed Brown and Governor; Football tribute dinners to the Alton teams; Ladies' night for beaming Rotary Anns gay in flowery corsages and alluring perfumery; Great fiscal concern over honoraria for speakers; Records lack readability, as do most minute books.

Perhaps most impressive is the record of budgets of \$1600 a year in the depression '30's contrasted with the current

reckoning for 1970, of \$5192 Revenues and \$6158 Disbursements; which parallels current methods of financing among families, businesses and governments. Principal problems were those of members delinquent in attendance.

So, let's go back to the first 20 years, for which the only reliable document available is a copy of the charter, dated March 1, 1921, signed by the most famous international secretary, Chesley R. Perry: and an account of the formation Feb. 23, 1905, of the first Rotary Club in Chicago by Paul P. Harris.

Organized in 1921

Bill Reavis, Superintendent of Schools, who had ramrodded the organization of the Alton Club was its first president and Albro Giberson secretary. There were 26 charter members, among whom were the leaders of the industries, professions and businesses of the community. They were delighted with the new idea of calling one another by their first names; lifting raucous voices in songs where volume obscured the lack of harmony; exchanging accounts of the vagaries of their occupations, and being required to stand up in front of their contemporaries and make speeches; the principle that the occupation of the lowly shoemaker was equal in dignity to that of the banker from whom he borrowed funds to buy leather for half-soles, so long as each rendered an honorable service to his customer; and both buyer and seller benefitted by their transactions.

Lesson Learned

Early they learned the folly of trying to be a Lady Bountiful. The river front was an unsightly landscape with squatters' shanties, fish markets, rambling boat docks . . . this of course, before the locks and dam were built. Someone proposed that this be alleviated by dredging sand over the clay banks to improve appearances; someone let a contract; and later the members of the club were billed for \$25 each, much to their dismay, because there was no one else to pay the bill. Dollars were hard to come

by, in those days, and it cured the club of taking on great undertakings for many a year.

No collections of funds, however worthy the purpose, were allowed; nor membership based on political occupations — two principles which were later abandoned.

When the club reached the adult age of 25 years, the occasion was observed with fitting ceremony, and a list of the names of former members, 184 in number, was compiled. Paraphrasing the Ziegfield Folies' motto "through the portals of Rotary" had marched the humble merchant, the top industrialist, names that built towns . . . Milnor, Lafe, Young, Rodgers, Mathews, Beall, Blaske, Corbett, Duncan, Ferguson, Hayes, Levis, Luer, Manbeck, Mulroy, Olin, Sparks, Watkins, Wessel.

Educators marched there, too, school superintendents, presidents of Monticello, Shurtleff, and Western Military Academy, and most of them served as president of the club at one time or another . . . which the industrialists did not. Sons followed them into membership in the club.

Roll-Back of Years

Recollections of occurrences which are clear even after the passage of so many years, seem worth reciting to give spotlight portrayals of the times:

Bill Levis, making abject apologies to a zealous secretary for absence from meetings because he was commuting between here and Toledo putting together the merger of the Illinois and Owens Glass companies into an industrial giant;

Dentist Don Stocker playing his coronet to lead the singing and composing a Rotary song which endured for years;

John McAdams being surprised with an attendance of 100 members and guests, which got his efforts off the ground to organize the Lewis and Clark Bridge project which built the bridges in 1927;

Chicago's Big Bill Thompson mooring his yacht at the foot



of Piasa Street and coming to the meeting to tell of his forthcoming sea voyage to find tree-climbing frogs . . . and bring international trade to Chicago;

Herman Schippers, of Shell, fining members with gusto for lacking buttons, being late, leaving early, and any other infraction of rules, which brought on a rebellion;

Monsignor Sloan, at an inter-club golf match, shocking the clergy of Kiwanis (who had demurred at the morals of letting the losers pay for the dinners of the winners) by boldly announcing on No. 1 tee that he had \$20,000 of the Bishop's money ready to bet he'd vanquish a perennial opponent.

The Best Program

All-time tops in programs . . . Paul B. Cousley, the most knowledgeable of Altonians; who vehemently denied ability to make a speech; describing the life of Elijah Lovejoy as a resident of Hunterstown; and the assassination which divided the citizenry and blighted Alton's opportunity as a river port at a time it was a neck-and-neck rival of St. Louis.

Bert Caldwell, dignified banker, who delighted at being called Bert instead of Mister; describing his concept of Rotary as a way of life second only to religion; and bearing enduring friendship for a secretary whose bulletin had given a functional account of a winsome miss, from who he had required some mark of identification to cash a check; and who showed him a birthmark just above her attractive left knee; at a time miniskirts were never dreamed of!

The club secretary being elected mayor, after a three month's campaign which not a sentence was uttered from the rostrum on the subject; until after the election, when the jeweler who was later to be his father-in-law presented



him with a tiepin with a diamond the size of a hazelnut; which he naively supposed was genuine. He should have known better, and did, later . . .

The war years '41-45, and '50-53, when most every member had a son in the armed forces, some as many as five; Ratchet listed eight Rotarians in the service; and club members all were on committees for the war effort; Ralph Jackson, Frank Rhine and Lafe Young staging blackout drills.

George Springman, 300 pounds of him, offering to ride a bicycle to East Alton in the July sun, if we could achieve a 100% attendance at any meeting; and actually making it to Chessen's Lane for a 95% one, bathed in sweat.

First District Meet

Greatest effort in fellowship and cooperation in these recollections was the District Conference in '32 when Carl Hartmann was president; so amiable was he that anybody would do anything for him. It was the first such undertaking of this kind for Alton in years. Four hundred registered; sessions opened in Western Military Academy; reviewed the parade of proud cadets; moved to the Steamer St. Paul the second day for cruise to the confluences of the Missouri and Illinois . . . the meeting of three mighty rivers; Luis Machado, handsome son of the President of Cuba was the international representative, could charm the bird out of a tree, and did; finale, the governor's grand ball in the W.M.A. gymnasium. A second conference came later, when George Wilkins was Governor, but is dim in memory. Schoolman Ray Ready was then president and Wilkins later went on to become State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

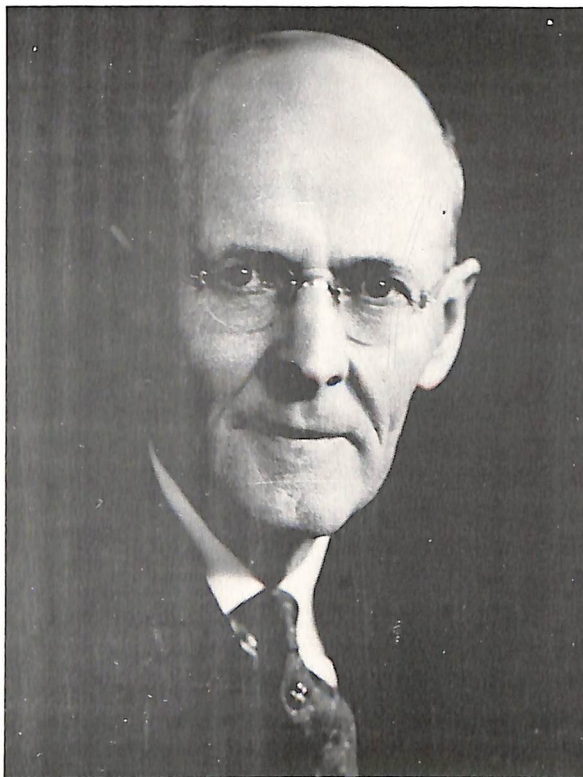
Now these are the recollections of a membership which began in 1923, and are still cherished as memoirs of an association in 48 years of helpful and congenial fellowship.

The president ordered written an account of 50 years of Rotary in Alton, and what it has meant.

In all this time, officers and members have come and gone, but of them all, the most diligent worker, the most devoted to principle of Service Above Self, and the most honored by his contemporaries, is the modest editor of the Ratchet, Louie Rupp.

These be many words, but such are the little things nice Rotary Clubs are made of.

Written and compiled by Thomas W. Butler 3-1-71



PAUL P. HARRIS

FOUNDER OF ROTARY
FEBRUARY 23, 1905



PROGRAM

C. Dana Eastman, Jr. Presiding

"Pledge of Allegiance" Assemblage

Invocation Rev. Dr. Cortley Burroughs

DINNER

Welcome & Introductions President C. Dana Eastman, Jr.

Expression from District Governor's Office. Earl E. Jukes

Introduction of Keynote Speaker Dr. Richard D. Jones

Keynote Address. Thomas W. Butler

Presentations Rev. Meredith J. Thomas

Benediction. Rev. John Young

Dinner Music by James Pritchett, et. al.



FIRST AND FIFTIETH PRESIDENTS OF ALTON ROTARY CLUB



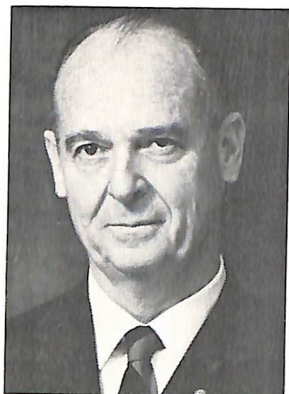
William C. "Bill" Reavis was the first President of the Alton Rotary Club. He was, while in Alton, Superintendent of Schools, in which position he so distinguished himself that he was called to larger fields. He is now connected with the University of Chicago, Department of Education, where he has won national recognition.



C. Dana Eastman, Jr., is a third generation Alton Rotary President, having been preceded by his grandfather, James T. Corbett (1925-26), and his father, C. Dana Eastman (1948-49). Dana and his Board of Directors have promoted new projects and a more active Alton Rotary Club to commemorate this fiftieth year.



ROTARY SENDS GREETINGS



Rotary International:

It is a pleasure to extend personal greetings to you on the important occasion of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of your club. This is truly a golden milestone in the history of Rotary.

A half century of "Service Above Self" is a record of which the Rotary Club of Alton can be justly proud. Your club has conducted significant activities in all four avenues of Rotary, and I congratulate all who have participated and carried on this great tradition of service and understanding and good will.

In addition to the commemorative festivities, your 50th anniversary provides an excellent opportunity for your club to re-evaluate its past accomplishments and set even greater goals for the future.

I call attention to this year's Rotary emphasis of "Bridge the Gaps" and I urge you to be a part of the solutions to the pressing problems that confront all mankind.

With rededication to the purpose of Rotary, I wish you continued success in all of the objectives of your fine club.

William E. Walk, Jr.
President of Rotary International



District Governor's Office:

Congratulations to you and the members of your Club on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Rotary in Alton.

During these years the value of the fellowship among members and service to the community cannot be measured. Rotary has added much to the life of Alton and to the lives of Rotarians.

I wish you continued success for the future.

Lamont H. Heidinger
Governor - District 646



FIRST OFFICERS AND CHARTER MEMBERS

In September, 1920, A.C. Bowseherdt, President of the East St. Louis Rotary Club, was appointed the District Governor's special representative to organize a Rotary Club in Alton.

The organization was completed and the club instituted on the 19th of February, 1921, with the following officers:

W. C. Reavis	President
James A. Giberson	Vice-President
Joseph G. Grossheim	Secretary
Abbott W. Sherwood	Treasurer
Leonard T. Hudson	Sergeant-at-Arms

Directors

W. C. Reavis	Waldo J. Baer
James A. Giberson	Rollie F. Allen
Joseph G. Grossheim	J. M. Malcolm
Abbott W. Sherwood	Eben Rodgers
George S. Milnor	Edmund H. Beall

Charter Members

L. T. Hudson	J. M. Malcolm	J. G. Grossheim
Jos. Goeken	W. C. Reavis	E. E. Campbell
Rev. F. D. Butler	Lafe Young	Dr. J. B. Hastings
F. W. Jones	E. M. Gaddis	H. B. Matthews
Geo. S. Milnor	Don Barrus	E. H. Beall
A. W. Sherwood	Eben Rodgers	R. F. Allen
W. M. Sauvage	Carl Hartmann	W. J. Baer
J. D. McAdams	J. A. Giberson	Griffin Watkins
	A. F. Ratz	



PRESENT CLUB OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

C. Dana Eastman, Jr.	President
Dr. Richard D. Jones	Vice-President
J. Paul Gitchoff, Jr.	Secretary
Edward W. Keller	Treasurer

Board of Directors

C. Dana Eastman, Jr.	Dr. Gail E. Myers
Dr. Richard D. Jones	C. Richard Chester
J. Paul Gitchoff, Jr.	Dr. Robert R. Anschuetz
Edward W. Keller	Henry C. Cairns
Kenneth A. Kloos	Dr. Donald S. Bottom
Louis G. Rupp	Dr. Julius Katz

Melvin A. Sparlin, Immediate Past President

PRESENT MEMBERSHIP

Almeter, James K	1968	Burroughs, Rev. Dr. Cortley H.	1961
Anschuetz, Dr. Robert R.	1950	Butler, Thomas W.	1923
Arst, Sidney	1947	Cairns, Henry C.	1967
Beeby, J. J.	1929	Chester, Richard C.	1968
Boals, Frank	1943	Clark, Russell G.	1943
Bordeaux, Leroy A.	1962	Cunningham, Edwin K.	1959
Bottom, Dr. Donald S.	1969	Drake, William J.	1956
Bowles, Lester B.	1965	Eastman, Jr., C. Dana	1965
Bristow, O. Martin	1923	Elsbach, Dr. Henry G.	1969
Brooks, Allen C.	1960	Erhart, Perry E.	1968
Buck, Charles M.	1965	Farley, Robert C.	1955



Foeller, Edward P. 1951
Foster, Jr., Dennison D. 1965
Foster, Sr., Dennison D. 1942
Freeman, Charles R. 1950
Fuchs, Jr., Peter E. 1963
Gaylord, Earl J. 1950
Giberson, Dudley F. 1933
Gitchoff, Jr., J. Paul 1968
Glynn, John J. 1959
Godwin, William I. 1937
Goulding, Robert L. 1927
Gray, Donald L. 1968
Green, Rudy A. 1950
Greenwood, John E. 1960
Greer, Kenneth C. 1970
Gregory, Edward J. 1962
Hanlon, Walter J. 1946
Hutchinson, Thomas K. 1965
Jackson, Ralph B. 1953
Jehle, John L. 1950
Jones, Dr. Richard D. 1967
Jourdain, Robert J. 1954
Katz, Dr. Julius 1964
Keeney, Bernard T. 1954
Keller, Edward W. 1965
Kloos, Kenneth A. 1952
Koppenhaver, Donald R. 1966
Kratschmer, Gene F. 1956
Kresteff, Dr. Assen D. 1963
Lauschke, Jr., Paul R. 1963
Long, Bugene E. 1969
Luken, Ralph W. 1947
McBrien, Nelson K. 1964
McCorry, Daniel C. 1970
Maggoss, Nick G. 1967
Mahon, Arthur J. 1938

Maley, Dr. Paul A. 1954
Maucker, Robert B. 1965
Meyer, Edward H. 1936
Mondhink, Harry R. 1959
Moore, Dr. Gordon F. 1948
Morgan, Byron L. 1961
Myers, Dr. Gail E. 1967
Nevlin, Harry A. 1950
Norman, Charles J. 1965
Peters, Robert A. 1961
Pfeiffenberger, Dr. Mather. 1953
Pivoda, Jr., Fayette W. 1968
Platt, Dr. Daniel W. 1966
Ready, Raymond 1938
Robertson, Dr. Forbes S. 1960
Rochleau, Marvin. 1968
Rupp, Louis G. 1949
Ruyle, Dwight E. 1965
Schulmeister, Dr. Melvin E. 1965
Slayton, Willis F. 1934
Smith, O. Derrell. 1954
Sowders, Jr., Rudy C. 1969
Sparlin, Melvin A. 1960
Stevenson, George F. 1963
Streeper, III, I.H. 1947
Sommers, Les 1971
Stimson, Andrew W. 1971
Taylor, Garth H. 1957
Thomas, Rev. Meredith J. 1970
Thompson, Leo E. 1969
Vine, Ben C. 1953
Walters, Robert J. 1965
Wardein, Joseph V. 1943
Wells, Harold A. 1965
Wienschienk, Isadore 1940
Yancey, Robert L. 1967
Young, Rev. John M. 1956



YEAR BY YEAR PRESIDENTS AND SECRETARIES

Feb. 1921— William C. Reavis President Joseph G. Grossheim Secretary	1934-35 — John L. Hurst President A. H. Eyler Secretary
1921-22 — William C. Reavis and R. F. Allen President Joseph G. Grossheim Secretary	1935-36 — Dr. Maurice R. Williamson President A. H. Eyler Secretary
1922-23 — Ralph L. Jackson President Rev. Fred D. Butler Secretary	1936-37 — H. J. Stephens President A. H. Eyler Secretary
1923-24 — W. T. Louden President J. A. Giberson Secretary	1937-38 — Dudley F. Giberson President Rev. Wallace W. Robbins Secretary
1924-25 — W. R. Curtis President W. G. Swope Secretary	1938-39 — Dr. D. D. Monroe President Carl A. Parrish Secretary
1925-26 — J. T. Corbett President Tom Butler Secretary	1939-40 — George B. Springman President C. L. Cunningham Secretary
1926-27 — John D. McAdams President Tom Butler Secretary	1940-41 — Ed. W. Brown President C. L. Cunningham Secretary
1927-28 — Harold Powell President John Thies Secretary	1941-42 — H. Rand Rodgers President Ed. W. Brown Secretary
1928-29 — Dr. H. E. Middleton President A. H. Eyler Secretary	1942-43 — Thomas W. Butler President Dudley F. Giberson Secretary
1929-30 — C. W. Warrinner President A. H. Eyler Secretary	1943-44 — George I. Rohrbough President Dudley F. Giberson and Joseph A. Hornsey Secretaries
1930-31 — E. H. Schippers President A. H. Eyler Secretary	1944-45 — Walter K. Stobbs President Parmer L. Ewing Secretary
1931-32 — C. A. Hartmann President A. H. Eyler Secretary	1945-46 — Clayton J. Scholsser President H. Edward Meyer Secretary
1932-33 — Dr. Mather Pfeiffenberger President A. H. Eyler Secretary	1946-47 — Parmer L. Ewing President C. L. Persing Secretary
1933-34 — H. A. Stiles President A. H. Eyler Secretary	1947-48 — H. Edward Meyer President Edward L. Hull Secretary



1948-49 — C. Dana Eastman Sr. President
Edwin L. Hull Secretary

1949-50 — Arthur J. Mahon President
Leon O. Meyer & Bert J. Wuellner Secretary

1950-51 — Edward E. Powers President
Leon O. Meyer Secretary

1951-52 — Bert J. Wuellner President
Dr. Robert R. Anschuetz Secretary

1952-53 — Leon O. Meyer President
Robert M. Stillwell Secretary

1953-54 — J. Milton Cassella President
Robert M. Stillwell Secretary

1954-55 — Edward P. Foeller President
Joseph A. Hornsey Secretary

1955-56 — Raymond Ready President
Joseph A. Hornsey Secretary

1956-57 — Ben C. Vine President
James J. Lewis Secretary

1957-58 — Dr. Robert R. Anschuetz President
Sidney S. Arst Secretary

1958-59 — Herbert R. Hellrung President
Sidney S. Arst Secretary

1959-60 — James J. Lewis President
Bernard T. Keeney Secretary

1960-61 — John L. Jehle President
George L. Springman Secretary

1961-62 — Bernard T. Keeney President
George L. Springman Secretary

1962-63 — Gene F. Kratschmer President
Rev. Dr. Cortley H. Burroughs Secretary

1963-64 — Herman T. Bunyan President
Rev. Dr. Cortley H. Burroughs Secretary

1963-64 — Dr. Forbes S. Robertson President
Dr. Paul A. Maley Secretary

1964-65 — Rev. Dr. Cortley H. Burroughs President
Dr. Paul A. Maley Secretary

1965-66 — Dr. John J. Glynn President
Dr. Forbes S. Robertson Secretary

1966-67 — Dr. Paul A. Maley President
LeRoy A. Bordeayx Secretary

1967-68 — Paul R. Lauschke Jr. President
Melvin A. Sparlin Secretary

1968-69 — LeRoy A. Bordeaux President
Dr. Richard D. Jones Secretary

1969-70 — Melvin A. Sparlin President
Dr. Richard D. Jones Secretary

1970-71 — C. Dana Eastman Jr. President
J. Paul Gitchoff Jr. Secretary



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ALTON ROTARY CLUB
MEETS MONDAY 6:00